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OFFICE OF PETITIONS

In re Application of
Andrew Welcher et al.
Application No. 09/927,850
Filed: August 10, 2001
Attorney Docket No. 077940.0102

:DECISION ON PETITION
:UNDER 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3)
: and
:UNDER 37 CFR 1.78(a)(6)
:

This is a decision on the petition filed August 18, 2009, under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3) to accept an unintentionally delayed claim under 35 U.S.C. § 120 for the benefit of prior-filed non-provisional application 09/724,860 filed November 8, 2000, and under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(6), to accept an unintentionally delayed claim under 35 U.S.C. §119(e) for the benefit of the prior-filed provisional application 60/169,720 filed December 8, 1999, which are set forth in the amendment filed with the petition.

The petition is **DISMISSED**.

A petition for acceptance of a claim for late priority under 37 CFR §§ 1.78(a)(3) and 1.78(a)(6) is only applicable to those applications filed on or after November 29, 2000. Further, the petition is appropriate only after the expiration of the period specified in 37 CFR §§ 1.78(a)(2)(ii) and 1.78(a)(5)(ii). In addition, the petition under 37 CFR §§ 1.78(a)(3) and 1.78(a)(6) must be accompanied by:

- (1) the reference required by 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and 119(e) and 37 CFR §§ 1.78(a)(2)(i) and 1.78(a)(5)(i) of the prior-filed application, unless previously submitted;
- (2) the surcharge set forth in § 1.17(t); and
- (3) a statement that the entire delay between the date the claim was due under 37 CFR §§ 1.78(a)(2)(ii) and 1.78(a)(5)(ii) and the date the claim was filed was unintentional. The Director may require additional information where there is a question whether the delay was unintentional.

The amendment as drafted is unacceptable and, therefore, is not considered a proper reference under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(i). In this regard, the priority claim is not in the proper form and must be in an amendment, not physically part of any other document as the response and, as such, does not comply with 37 CFR 1.121, 1.52, or 1.4(c). Note that 37 CFR 1.121 states that amendments are made by filing a paper, in compliance with § 1.52, directing that specified amendments be made. The pertinent section of 37 CFR 1.52 states that the claim (in this case, the claim for priority), must commence on a separate physical sheet. 37 CFR 1.4(c) states that each distinct

subject must be contained in a separate paper since different matters may be considered by different branches of the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

Additionally, the reference to add the prior-filed application should not include an incorporation by reference statement. An incorporation by reference statement added after an application's filing date is not effective because no new matter can be added to an application after its filing date (see 35 U.S.C. § 132(a)). If an incorporation by reference statement is included in an amendment to the specification to add a benefit claim under 35 U.S.C. § 120 after the filing date of the application, the amendment would not be proper. When a benefit claim under 35 U.S.C. § 120 is submitted after the filing of an application, the reference to the prior application cannot include an incorporation by reference statement of the prior application. See Dart Industries v. Banner, 636 F.2d 684, 207 USPQ 273 (C.A.D.C. 1980). Note MPEP §§ 201.06(c) and 608.04(b).

Before the petition under 37 CFR §§ 1.78(a)(3) and 1.78(a)(6) can be granted, a renewed petition and either a Supplemental Application Data Sheet (signed in compliance with 37 CFR 1.33(b) and in compliance with 37 CFR 1.76) or a substitute amendment (complying with the provisions of 37 CFR 1.121 or 37 CFR 1.76(b)(5)) to correct the above matters are required.

Further correspondence with respect to this matter should be addressed as follows:

By mail: Mail Stop PETITIONS
 Commissioner for Patents
 Post Office Box 1450
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By hand: Customer Service Window
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Any questions concerning this matter may be directed to Senior Petitions Attorney Patricia Faison-Ball at (571) 272-3212.


Anthony Knight
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